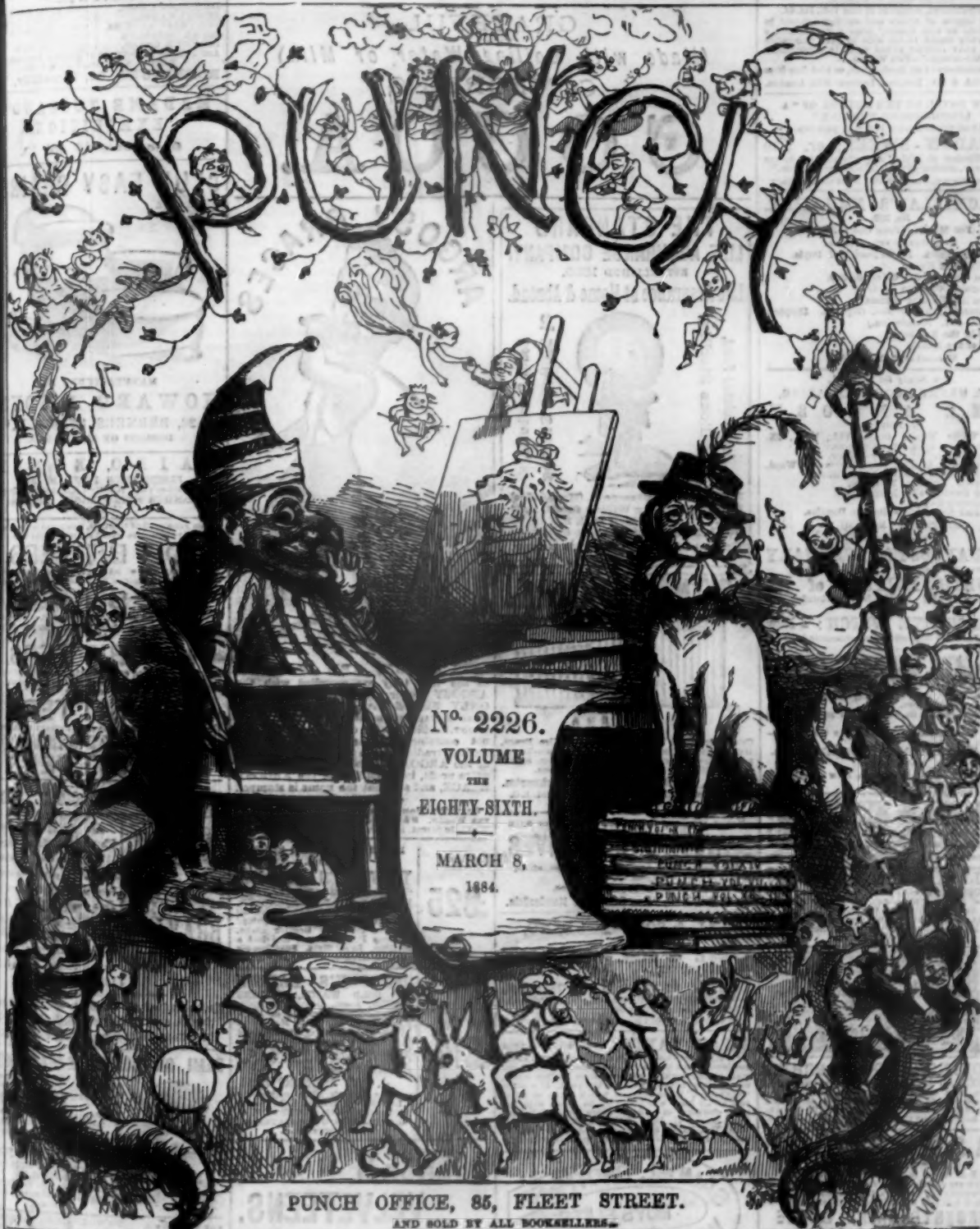


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my letter this week by singing the praises of a medicine which has the valuable property of curing what all the world is suffering from at this season, more or less—namely, a cold in the head. It is called "Glykoline," three drops of which taken at intervals of an hour will infallibly do away with the most obstinate of colds. "Talon Rouge," VANITY FAIR, March 17, 1877. "Glykoline," prepared by LEATH & BROS., 4 St. Paul's, and 5, Vere St., W. All Chemists, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 6d.; post, 1s. 6d. and 2s.

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SOMETHING ON COMMISSION.

FURTHER dissatisfaction having been expressed in certain influential quarters as to the constitution of the Royal Commission recently appointed to inquire into the question of the Dwellings of the Poor, several of the leading Members again met secretly yesterday for the purpose, not only of disposing personally of the various objections raised against their individual appointment, but also of vindicating the claims of their body generally to merit public confidence in the important undertaking they now have in hand.

The door having been looked by the unanimous consent of those assembled, and Sir CHARLES DILKE immediately voted into the Chair, he said he would not waste their time by any lengthy preamble, but come to the point at once. On Friday last, smarting under the gibes of a set of captious know-nothings in the Press—and elsewhere—("Hear, hear!")—who had hinted that the presence at that Board of several of the Commissioners, owing to their want of practical experience of the evils they were called on to investigate, would be worse than useless ("Shame!"), they had determined then and there to adjourn their meeting for a week for the purpose of passing the interval in "energetic personal inquiry." (Cheers.) This ordeal, to judge from the worn and dilapidated aspect of the Commissioners he saw around him that morning—(roars of laughter)—there had been evidently no disposition to shirk. ("Hear, hear!") All he could do then was to remark that he was not only prepared but eager to hear what they had got to say. (Cheers.)

LOLD SALISBURY, who had his head bandaged, and was evidently suffering from intermittent toothache and sciatica, and whose appearance on rising caused a considerable amount of merriment, said he really had very little to tell the meeting. (A laugh.) He did not see what there was to laugh at. (Renewed laughter.) Some twopenny-halfpenny scribbler had asserted that he, as a British Marquis, could possibly know nothing of real life in a Metropolitan slum. He had determined to give a practical contradiction to that statement. (Cheers.) He had disguised himself as an Irish labourer, and rented the fifth of a room in a back court in Seven Dials for a week. (Loud cheers.) He did not see what there was to cheer at. ("Oh, oh!") His experience had been practical enough. He had had two stand-up fights, his head nearly broken with a brickbat, and he had been taken three times into custody by blundering Constables—who would not look at his card—and he had, as the result, got a rheumatic attack, which Sir WILLIAM GULL thought likely to be chronic. (A voice—"Never mind that!") That was all very well; but he had quite made up his mind about what the working classes really wanted. ("Hear, hear!") They wanted better homes, better incomes, better food, better clothes, better manners, more polite Policemen—and most of all—better claret. Some *Château Margaux* he had tried in Clare Market had nearly killed him. (Cheers.)

CARDINAL MANNING here rose. He said that he was unwilling to contradict the Noble Marquis who had given them all such an amusing and spirited account of his experiences; but he, the Cardinal, must beg to differ with him. What the poor wanted was some really palatable drinking water. ("Hear, hear!") His colleagues might scarcely credit it, but he had spent six consecutive days in climbing in and out of, and tasting continually—he might say, copiously—the water of cisterns in the lowest class of alleys in and about Bermondsey, the Borough Road, Clerkenwell, the outlying districts of Kilburn, and the Isle of Dogs. (Cheers.) He had not felt well since. (Renewed cheers.) Now if that indisposition was the result of the water, the Government ought at once to supply to every pauper in this country a thirteen-and-sixpenny filter. ("Hear!") A credit vote of five millions and a-half sterling would soon remedy that evil.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS said, with all respect for the Cardinal's figures, he thought it would be far better to contract with some enterprising company to lay on a good supply of "Apollinaris." This would be far cheaper, and much more refreshing, and if it were found lowering to the system in depressing districts, it could be mixed freely with a little whiskey that could be chargeable to the rates. No philanthropic householder could object to such an outlay as this. (Cheers.) Such a beverage would, at least, elevate the tone of the masses. ("Hear!")

Mr. LUTHER STANLEY, who had a very dejected appearance, said, though no friend to stimulants, he was not unprepared to support the suggestion of the last speaker. He had made it his business to try and enjoy himself in an innocent way, after the fashion of the lower classes, during the course of an East-End Sunday. He had done all that could be done in the way of recreation in the neighbourhood. ("Hear, hear!") He had stood five hours outside a public-house, and seven inside. Three hours he had looked at a gutter, and the rest of the day he had passed in playing at pitch-and-toss with a weighted halfpenny. (Sensation.) That is why he looked unhappy. He thought the lower classes needed recreation, but whether in the shape of Italian Opera, a State-aided Fancy Ball, permanent nightly fireworks, or higher culture, in evening dress, with a magic lantern, he was not prepared to say. ("Hear!")

At this point of the proceedings a letter arrived for the Chairman, and, after perusing it once or twice, he rose, and said he thought, as it contained an admirable practical suggestion from a very distinguished member of the Commission indeed—(cheers)—he could not do better than read it to those assembled. ("Hear, hear!") It was as follows:—

MY DEAR SIR CHARLES,

I HAD heard of your projected Meeting for to-day, and as, though I regret I am personally unable to attend it, I am most anxious to give the excellent object that brings you together my hearty co-operation and support, I have much pleasure in placing the subjoined suggestion at your disposal. Would it not be an excellent thing were some eight or nine of the Commissioners, who might select themselves by lot, to hire an ill-ventilated room—say, ten feet by seven—and undertake to sleep on the floor for a fortnight or so—it being understood, of course, that the cubic feet of air available for the whole party would be something short of the mark? I cannot but think that some such experience on the part either of yourself or your colleagues would prove at once a valuable, interesting, and amusing assistance to the progress of our joint labours. Offering you this suggestion for what it is worth, I am, my dear Sir CHARLES,

Yours sincerely,

A BROTHER COMMISSIONER.

After the reading of the above letter, which was interrupted throughout by loud and prolonged bursts of cheering, the Chairman, intimating that his influenza, caught during his recent three days' apprenticeship to a match-box maker resident in a cellar at Houndsditch, was again beginning to be troublesome, declared the Meeting adjourned, and the company quietly separated.

BURLESQUE AND MELODRAMA.

Piece in one Act, written for a "Star" anxious to shine in various lights.

SCENE—A gorgeous Interior. Large curtain (practicable) at back. Star presiding at a Cabinet Council. Period doubtful. Costumes splendid.

Star. And this is your work!

[Makes a long declamatory speech à la RUY BLAS, showing how the Ministry has brought the country to the verge of ruin.]

A Courtier. Ah, my Lord, you are severe. You are a patriot. Would that we were patriots. But as for us, we have been frivolous from our birth up!

[Exeunt everybody save the Star.]
Star. And they think that I have never been frivolous! Why, in the day of my hot youth I was the gayest of the gay! I spent the whole of my time singing and dancing. Yes—singing and dancing. (Looking round.) There is no one present. Let me indulge in mimics of my hot youth. There!

[Sings and dances. At the end of the entertainment enter

CHARLES (his friend) in a disguise cloak.

Charles (his friend). At last we meet face to face!

Star. Welcome—thrice welcome! How well I remember the way we spent our time as boys together.

[Long speech introduced, full of comedy, showing the way the two spent their time as boys together.]

Charles (his friend) (after the Star has taken his encore). You are mistaken. I am CHARLES (throwing off disguise)—but no longer your friend! (Producing sword.) Choose your weapon!

Star. What, the Duck der RICHERLOO! At last!

[Seizes sword. Magnificent duel à la the Corsican Brothers.]

CHARLES (his friend) is wounded to the death.

Charles (his friend). Ah! But, ere I die, let me curse you. I—

[Dies.]

Star. Poor fellow! He would have cursed me! He would have

said— [Delivers the curse for him.]

After the applause has subsided, the body of CHARLES is removed.

Mourners. Your blessing, my Lord! [They fall on their knees.]

Star. You ask my blessing? Well, be it as you will. [Delivers

blessing in sixty lines of polished blank verse. Exeunt Mourners.]

Nay, but this has fatigued me! I must seek repose. This is no acting, but terrible earnest. How different from the past; how well I

remember the days when, at the Court of Versailles, I used to please

the Court of the Regent of FRANCE, with my amateur acting. [Falls

asleep upon a couch, covered with curtains, à la Matthias in the

"Bells." The Curtain at the back of the Stage is withdrawn, showing

the Star's dream, in which he imagines that he is giving selections

from "Hamlet," "Othello," and "Macbeth." When his imper-

sonations are exhausted, the Curtain falls, and the Star wakes up.]

Ah, those were happy days! (Rising from his couch.) But what is

this? An earthquake! (Earthquake. General destruction of

Interior.) And I alone am saved! (Is struck by lightning.) Not

so! Oh! [Dies in five-and-forty minutes, according to taste.]

Curtain.

BRUIN IN COKAIGNE.*

[Russia declares that although she had undertaken not to seize upon Merv, this did not apply to its voluntary submission.]

*Bruin loquitor—*

Who says I am greedy? He does me great wrong,
This bias against me's exceedingly funny;
But prejudice is so confoundedly strong!

My tastes are most simple; a little wild honey
Suffices my needs, in a general way.

A Saint could not be more abstemious—normally,
And as to my prowling in search of fat prey,
The charge is absurd, I abjure it most formally.

It hurts me, it really *does* hurt me, to find
The rest of the world so devoid of all charity.

I'm a generous brute, with a genial mind,
And I potter about in a state of hilarity,

* Cokaigne (or Kitchen-land), a legendary Paradise of sensual delights, where pigs ready-roasted are said to run about with knives and forks, crying, "Come, eat us!" where "the geese roasted on the spitte" fly about, crying, "Gees! al hote! al hote!" and where stewed larks drop voluntarily into the traveller's mouth.

Like a middle-aged gentleman taking a stroll,

And if, why of course if I happen to hit on
Cokaigne, where plump porkers *will* run about whole,

Ready-cooked, what is that to JOHN BULL or Lord LYTON?

I own I had sworn off of pig—in a sense,

That is, *stolen* pig, and that pledge I won't violate.

I'll not join a pig-hunt on any pretence

(Although I've had rather good sport in my eye o' late),

But really, you know, if fat porkers *will* come

And solicit my fangs, as it were, in this fashion,

What *am* I to do? It looks tempting. *Nyum, Nyum!*

My mouth waters! LEO will get in a passion,

I've not the least doubt. He wants *all* the tit-bits,

He likes vastly well on his rounds to discover

Fat geese of Cokaigne ready cooked on their spits,

Whilst I,—well, of simple plain food I'm a lover.

But when a *bonne-bouche* just drops into one's maw,

Unthought—as in this case—and *prays* to be gobbled,



"MISPLACED CONFIDENCE."

Nervous Lady Visitor. "WHO IS THAT NICE CIVIL MAN TO WHOM I'VE BEEN SPEAKING, AND WHOM I'VE LATELY MET HERE AND TALKED WITH SO OFTEN!"

Pauper Gateman (jealous of his monopoly of "Tips"). "'E, M'UM! WHY 'E'S THE 'NFIRMARY MAN, M'UM!—AS 'TEND TO THE PATIENTS WITH THE SMALL P—"

Lady Visitor (with a shriek). "OH, GOOD GRACIOUS! LET ME OUT! LET ME OUT!"

[Tableau.]

I really can't see that there's any just law

By which a poor Bear should be muzzled and hobbled.

"Come, eat me! Come, eat me!" Now, who could resist

Such a touching appeal? It looks awfully succulent,

Old Leo's engaged, I've a terrible twist,

I'll fall to—and a fig for my foes fierce and truculent!

THE GREAT PANJANDRUM HIMSELF.

If there is one offence which Persons in Authority object to more than another, it is that of Writing to the Papers—at least, when that insidious device is adopted by persons *under* Authority. The Great Panjandrum of Officialdom, of Monopoly, and of Trade would, if they had their will, no doubt make it a capital offence, without benefit of Clergy. As it is, they always resent it vehemently in public, and generally avenge themselves on the detected culprit in private.

Certain persons, malignant minions, no doubt, in the employ of the Civil Service Supply Association have lately been perpetrating this unpardonable sin. At the Annual General Meeting held at the City Terminus Hotel on Wednesday last, the Chairman, Mr. GEO. PEARSON, referred to their guilty deeds in the usual tone of solemn scorn (for the Press) and lofty indignation (against its anonymous and interested correspondents). When Titan Commerce "gives itself airs," the effect is very imposing. "The Shareholders," said the Chairman, with large finality, "are well aware that there is no ground for any charge against the Association of want of consideration in the treatment of its servants." One of the Shareholders, however, protested that he was not "aware" of this, which, indeed, was the very point at issue. This, though less imperial than the style of Mr. PANJANDRUM—we mean Mr. PEARSON—sounds at least somewhat pertinent.

Mr. HARDINGE moved—"That a Committee of ten Shareholders,

not Members of the Committee of Management, be appointed to inquire into the alleged grievances of the *employés*, and report to the next General Meeting thereupon." This again does not seem wildly unreasonable. But the Chairman thought it was "really too bad to renew an agitation after it had ceased." He did not say *why* ceased, whether from absence of solid foundation or impossibility of obtaining redress. The Meeting agreed with the Chairman, and Mr. HARDINGE's motion was lost.

And yet there was considerable show of reason about Mr. HARDINGE. He wanted the matter to be fairly inquired into, and the Association to be fully cleared from an unpleasant stigma. "Never," said he, "let it be said that the Shareholders of that Association were soulless and devoid of sympathy for their assistants, and cared for nothing but their dividends." Well, this *has* been said of the Shareholders of such Associations, and said with considerable emphasis. If it can be refuted, well and good. But it is not that easiest of Big Wow-wow devices, a lofty *Pumblechook*-like repudiation of peccability, which will satisfy the Public that such Associations are little paternally conducted Paradises for their multitudinous *employés*.

Mr. Punch makes this little friendly suggestion to whom it may concern, without—for the present—committing himself to an opinion as to the particular points here in dispute.

A Serious Business.

THE Lady who contributed the following advertisement to the *Daily News* does not seem to be aware of the value of time in London.

A N AUTHORESS, who lives in France, WANTS a London Editor to TRANSLATE and PUBLISH three serious Writings.—Address, &c.

If we know anything of the work and worries of London Editors, we should say this want is not likely to be speedily supplied.

OUR NEXT EXPEDITION;

OR, STRICTLY ACCORDING TO PRECEDENT.

Extract from Government Despatch to British Unofficial Adviser to His Highness the Sheriff of Tongs-an-Pokar.—In reply to your announcement that the Sheriff has dispatched a force of two thousand of the Retired Amazon Militia to seize the Death Swamps of Malaria, which you say contain five hundred thousand miles of territory and fifteen millions of the Cutthrostaneees, it must be obvious to you that your connection with Her Majesty's Government forbids you to interfere in any way with His Highness, beyond urging upon him the necessity of reflection. You will immediately send back the Army of Occupation.

Cipher Telegram from the British Unofficial Adviser to His Highness the Sheriff, &c., to the Government.—The Retired Amazon Militia have been cut to pieces. The Cutthrostaneees are advancing upon the capital. May we use the Army of Occupation for relief of garrisons and defence of country?

Extract from Government Despatch to British Unofficial Adviser, &c.—It will be obvious to you that your position will prevent you from holding out any hopes to the Sheriff of relief from England beyond cordial advice, which you will supply upon requisition. The Army of Occupation may, however, remain on condition that its services are purely honorary and nominal.

Cipher Telegram from the British Unofficial Adviser, &c., to the Government.—Ruin staring us in the face. Leader in London paper asking for war greatly approved.

Cipher Telegram from Government to British Unofficial Adviser, &c.—Imprison Sheriff. Disband his Army. Seize his treasury. Army of Occupation will carry this out. Further British force will take possession of additional country as soon as possible.

Confidential Paper from Chief of Government to Secretary for War.—How many troops are available for immediate service in Malaria?

Reply.—H.R.H. Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief says twenty Regiments of the Line. However, as the Battalions are rather under their strength, this will only give us three hundred men.

Telegram from Cabinet Council to First Lord of Admiralty.—Send immediately all the Marines to Malaria.

Reply.—All the Marines are being sent. Detachments are now being moved to the desired spot from Asia, Africa, and America.

Telegram from Commander of British Troops, Malaria, to Chief of Government.—Have now twenty Marines under my command. What am I to do with them?

Confidential Paper from Chief of Government to Secretary for War.—Enclose telegram from Malaria. Please answer. Despatch will oblige. Avoid friction with Admiralty. Marines, as they have been mounted, are distinctly military. Wire direct to Malaria.

Reply.—Commander of British Troops, Malaria, will do nothing until Senior Officer is selected for service. Probably the choice will fall upon Sir CHURCHILL HOWARD LENNOX, who, however, will not be able to start for Malaria until after the next Committee Meeting of the Senior United Service Club.

Telegram from Commander of British Troops, Malaria, to Chief of Government.—What is the object of our Expedition? Have now some more Marines, a Cavalry Regiment without horses, and a Battery of Artillery without guns. Think might make a dash with this force, and relieve Potluck.

Reply.—Do nothing until further orders.

Telegram from Commander of British Forces, &c., to Chief of Government.—Cutthrostaneees advancing. Are we to retreat? Article in London paper, suggesting intervention, has made Malarian sovereigns (recently quoted at three-halfpence a-dozen) worth eight-and-sixpence each.

Reply.—Retreat! Certainly not. Take Potluck, relieve Bang, Whacker, and Tolderol.

Telegram from Commander of British Forces, &c., to Chief of Government.—Too late. Potluck blown up by rebels, Bang and Whacker surrounded, and Tolderol gone over to the enemy. Shall we come home?

Reply (No. 1).—Yes—immediately.

Reply (No. 2).—No—certainly not.

Telegram from Commander of British Forces, &c., to Chief of Government.—Please repeat orders. What are we to do?

Reply.—Why, something. Advance. Carry everything by storm. Lead lots of forlorn hopes. Surely you know your business. Have you all you want?

Answer.—Nearly all. Kindly send two thousand horses, six hundred elephants, twenty-nine camels, and seventeen hundred and ninety-eight thousand mules. When these arrive can move the Expeditionary Force of twelve hundred men nearly four miles. Should also like a billion rounds of ball-cartridges, as I have no ammunition. Kindly use despatch.

Telegram from Cabinet Council to Commander of British Troops, &c.—Your order attended to. Articles indented for will reach you in

the course of next year. May expect some of the mules in six months' time, and most of the elephants will reach you a few weeks later. Ammunition as soon as possible. In meanwhile have sent you sixteen transports containing plum-puddings, sabretaches, woolen gloves, Highland bonnets, and sentry-boxes.

Reply.—Articles wired for urgently required. Shall I buy them here? Will cost now about a couple of hundred thousand. Will be dearer later. Please send a doctor if possible.

Answer.—No, mustn't think of buying anything on the spot. We can't afford it. Doctor impossible until after the next Army Medical Examination in August, when result of competition will be known. Six will then be sent—if necessary.

Telegram from Commander, Malaria, to Government, London.—Crisis acute. What shall I do?

Reply.—Anything you like. Money no object. Get out of it as best you can. Please use despatch.

Telegram from Commander of British Troops, &c., to Cabinet Council.—Glad to say that force under my command have won twenty-seven pitched battles and conquered the entire country. All is tranquil. Meantime affair may prove expensive. Probably will cost about eighteen millions. By the way, what shall I do with Malaria?

Reply.—Thanks! Come home. Never mind Malaria.

Endorsement of Mr. Tenterfour (Government Clerk) on the above papers before "putting them away" for an indefinite period.—"This parcel to be pigeon-holed with the bundles about the Crimea, Maiwand, Isandula, and Majuba Hill."

TALK FOR LONDON.

Paterfamilias. Do you think that if I gave the local Policeman half-a-crown a week (in addition to the pay which he gets from Government), a good dinner on Sunday, and a glass of hot brandy-and-water every night, he would be disposed to give an eye to that particularly lonely common which I have to pass about one o'clock every morning?

Materfamilias. As you are likely, dear, to be late home after the theatre to-night, would you like to take the six-chambered revolver, the patent electric rattle, or the bull-dog with you?

I hope you will like the new gardener we have got, love. I engaged him because he says he knows how to drag ponds and reservoirs, and I thought he might be useful in case you failed to return home at your usual hour.

The Head of the Firm. So Mr. SMITH has not been down to the office this morning. Dear me! I wonder whether we ought to communicate with Scotland Yard, or the undertaker, first?

Sir William Harcourt. One of the Policemen in the Stoke Newington Tragedy—in which a young man was first robbed, then strangled, and his body thrown into a reservoir, the murderers escaping scot-free with eight pounds and a gold chain—stated "he didn't see any suspicious characters" about that night, although a Gentleman and Lady did see a couple, at two different hours of the evening. What plan can be devised for making the Police themselves rather more "suspicious characters" than they seem to be at present?

Another Policeman said he "doubled" the road once every hour, i.e., walked up one side, and down the other—no doubt with the characteristic and heavy "tramp, tramp," the meaning of which must be obvious to the meanest homicidal capacity.

HOWARD VINCENT says London is the safest capital in Europe. What delightful places of residence Paris and Vienna must be, then!

If a few more brutal murders go undetected, won't it be necessary, instead of the Policemen "doubling" the streets, for the Government to double the Policemen?

Earthquakes for the Million.

THE Pall Mall Gazette says: "An Earthquake Observatory is being started in Japan by Professor MILNE of the Imperial Engineering College in Tokio." It is too far for us to go to Tokio, even to observe earthquakes, therefore we are glad to be able to state that Professor TOOLE has started an Observatory in King William Street, where the luxury of an earthquake is brought within the reach of all classes, and may be observed every evening until further notice.

A FRIEND was reading out to Mrs. RAMSBOTHAM a paragraph from the *Tablet* about the number of Cardinals now in existence, and when she came to the statement "that to this number" (fifty-six) "must be added one Cardinal reserved in *Petto* (Dec. 13, 1880),"—Mrs. RAMSBOTHAM exclaimed, "Dear me, how cruel! I hope they feed him regularly. But what could he have done to be looked up all that time?"

PITY THE POOR BALL!

THE following thrilling Letters, as a further contribution to the newspaper correspondence on the subject of "the merits of Football as a national game," will be read with some eagerness by nervous mothers, surgical instrument makers, and all those who have of late been watching the course of this entertaining controversy with anxiety and interest:—

SIR,—I have read the letter of your Correspondent who signs himself "ONE WHO HAS HITHERTO RECEIVED MANY MORE KICKS THAN HALPENCE," and I can only say, that he appears to me thoroughly to have deserved all that he has got for his pains. To go into this fine manly game padded with "a feather-holster strapped firmly to the front of each leg, from the ankle to the hip" (*sic*), is enough to rouse the ire of any old "back" alive; and, speaking for myself, I should certainly, as the rest of the opposing team seem to have done, have left the ball alone, and, if possible, have set your Correspondent himself spinning in all directions across the ground. The sooner such players are kicked fairly home, the better it will be for those who, like your obedient servant, is happy to subscribe himself,

FIFTEEN STONE IN HIS BOOTS.

SIR,—My reply to the stupid, bloodthirsty, and ribald rejoinder of a "RAW RUGBY RECRUIT" is the following extract, cut from the Sporting Intelligence column of a provincial paper. It speaks for itself:—

GORKHAM ATHLETIC CLUB v. LIMPING ROVERS.—These Rugby Union teams met yesterday in the Club grounds. The turf was extremely heavy, but this did not interfere with the fast and furious play that was naturally looked for by the respective backers of these two celebrated "mauling" lots. There was a large attendance on the grounds, and the Hospital Tent, with its cheery surgical trappings added materially to the liveliness of the scene. The Club having lost the toss, sent the ball cleverly rolling towards the ditch, where a little scrimmage occurring, their opponents, who had a few legs broken in the set-off, were forced to touch down five-and-twenty times running in self-defence. After this, positions were slightly reversed, and BROWN, making a clever run with the ball to the opposite end of the field, a rather hot "maul" followed, in which both teams, amid the sound of tearing flesh, cracking ribs, and dislocated joints, rolled over and over rather heavily towards the near goal, under the impression they were taking the ball along with them. JONES, creeping out of the struggling holocaust, now nearly gained a try for the Rovers, but was quickly tackled by ROBINSON and JENKINS, who, by some excellent free play, managed to fracture his jaw and break one of his ankles, and so give the Club a good chance. Although the match was then stubbornly contested by what was left of the contending teams, "no side" was called, and the Hospital Tent being full, and the Ball reduced to an unrecognisable pulp, the game was declared drawn.

Upon this picture, so familiar to all who are in the habit of witnessing what is termed "a game at Football," I make no comment. But I ask, Sir, in the name of all that is English, whether such an account as the above is pleasant reading for one who, like myself, has sent all his boys in turn to a great Public School, with the injunction to each "to be manly," and has now, as a consequence, much to his annoyance, to subscribe himself permanently,

THE FATHER OF FIVE ON CRUTCHES.

SIR,—I am one of those who, though wishing earnestly to see our great national pastimes kept up, would not only not suffer them to degenerate into a degrading and brutal carnage, but even free them from the reproach of that rough and rude horse-play, which, while it inflicts serious mischief on the delicately organised *physique* of the highly strung and timid, debases the moral nature of those who have any share or part in its pursuit. Football, as I understand it, should be played not with the foot at all, but by the hand. Satin tights and dancing-pumps should take the place of savage stockings and hangman's boots, while the ball itself should no longer be a horrid and pachydermatous inflated monstrosity, but a light, airy, gaily-coloured, and scented bladder, which the touch of a beautifully gloved hand should propel above the heads of the tripping teams beneath. No struggle, no rush, no "maul" should desecrate the elegant game, from which even a chance contact should eject the clumsy and ill-mannered player. I have seen football, *real football*, of this kind, played with grace and *elan* by the students of the Lycées, in the South of France, and I can testify to the genuine amusement, interest, and astonishment with which, only the other day, I noted that a Rugby boy, who happened to be looking on at one of these harmless contests, appeared to be regarding the game. Trusting that, by the publication of this letter, you will help to induce our great Football Clubs to reform their rules, and so purge and improve a great national pastime,

I am, your obedient Servant,

ROBERTUS.

SIR.—There's a good deal, it seems to me, to be said, specially as regards the Rugby game, on both sides of the question; but, meantime, isn't it possible to devise a set of rules that shall just hit the right nail on the head, and give a fellow a free chance of a fine bit of healthy and hearty outdoor exercise, without obliging him to run the risk even of a badly-damaged rib? A little more skill, Sir, and a little less of sheer brute-force? At least, that is about what seems to be wanted to set matters quite square, and make them satisfy

COMMON SENSE.

SALVINI.

To show the living shapes our SHAKESPEARE drow
In the large spirit of the Master—this
Is triumph. Even envy's little hiss
Is silent; and the simple courtesy due
To Genius as a guest becomes in sooth
Warm and admiring tribute in the mouth
Of friends assured. He brings us from the South
A fiery energy and massive truth
Unmatched, and with sonorous strength draws forth
Impetuous welcome from our chillier North.

A Wandering Minstrel.

THE Moore and Burgess Minstrels are usually supposed to "never perform out of London." Their leading spirit, however, performed the other day at the Lillie Bridge Grounds, when Mr. G. W. MOORE came off the victor in a walking-match with Mr. ALFRED STEEL. The latter gentleman was unable to steal a march on his opponent. Mr. MOORE used his muscles as skilfully and as persistently as he plies his bones at St. James's Hall, and won by two laps and eighty yards, amid enthusiastic shouts of "The Moore the merrier!" and "Vive le Moore!" A large number of Burgesses attended in their gowns and chains of office.

MR. HENRY IRVING has been elected a member of the Reform Club. It was said he intended standing for Parliament. Had he not telegraphed to contradict the report, he would have, of course, represented one of the Tower Hamlets.

OUR EGYPTIAN POLICY (*Latest Edition*).—Egypt for the English.

A CAUTION TO CHURCH-GOERS DURING LENT.



ENTRANCE.



In the middle of the service, the Gentleman behind suddenly remembered an engagement, and, in a moment of thoughtlessness, took our Artist's hat, leaving his own in exchange.

EXIT.



DON'T!"

ADVICE TO PEOPLE WHO WISH TO GET ON.

DON'T FAMILIARLY ACCOST MRS. MOWBRAY MONTRESSOR (TO WHOM YOU ARE A STRANGER), AND THEN EXCUSE YOURSELF ON THE PRETEXT THAT YOU MISTOOK HER FOR HER SISTER, MRS. MELBURY PAUNCHFOTE. YOU WILL NOT BE WELL RECEIVED, SNOOKSON, MY BOY!

DON'T HESITATE TO ADDRESS MRS. MELBURY PAUNCHFOTE, IF YOU SHOULD HAPPEN TO MEET HER, WITH THE APOLOGY THAT YOU ARE ALWAYS MISTAKING HER FOR MRS. MOWBRAY MONTRESSOR. THE INTRODUCTION MAY NOT BE QUITE REGULAR, BUT YOU WILL MAKE A FRIEND.

ECHOES FROM THE THAMES OF THE FUTURE.

CAN it be true that the Express Boats of the new "Grand American Palace Steamboat Company (Unlimited)" now run from Chelsea Pier to London Bridge in a quarter of an hour?

Did I understand you to say that each vessel was fitted with the Electric Light, Turkish Baths, Billiard Saloons, Stewards and Stewardesses, several first-rate Cooks, and one of the Queen's Physicians in Ordinary as Ship's Doctor?

Ah! Then these sixpenny tickets do really allow me a cushioned seat on the hurricane deck, a trip to Gravesend and back, unlimited provisions *en route*, and a choice of a stall in any London theatre.

As all the Metropolitan bridges have been elevated on to cast-iron cylinders a hundred feet high, in order to afford room for the new "smokestacks" to pass underneath, the scenery on the banks of the Thames is hardly so picturesque as it used to be.

Is it possible that the smoking of vile tobacco is now absolutely prohibited on board, and that Champagne and Apollinaris Water are the only beverages served at the Refreshment Bars in the Steerage?

I see in this morning's paper that the twenty-five Directors of the Palace Steamboat Company who have seats in Parliament are expected to offer a vigorous opposition to the Government Bill, which exacts compensation from the Company for every person (over the number of six) swamped in pleasure-boats through the wash of the steamers.

It is regrettable that the Underground Railway should have ceased to run trains from Westminster to the Mansion House now that the grandest waterway in Europe, close to its finest thoroughfare, has been really opened up for passenger traffic.

REST WITH HONOUR (*List of Severely Wounded, March 1, 1884*).—
VALENTINE BAKER.

FOES AND FRIENDS.

Who with the shock of thunderous murder trusts
To shake us from our purpose? Miscreant fools!
The State shall find an armour 'gainst the thrusts
Of all the Assassins whom late Science schools
In hellish arts of horror, ruthless, base,
And blindly indiscriminate. May we not
Trust firmly to far scions of our race,
Whom the seas part from us but sever not,
For all such aid, in our most righteous task,
As just respect may give and honour ask?

PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE.

It is said that, now that he has re-entered the House of Commons, Mr. MARRIOTT, the ex-Liberal-Conservative, will join the Fourth Party, upon the distinct understanding, that when the discreet and experienced Leader of that important though not numerous body is summoned to Her MAJESTY, in order to form an administration, the late Liberal Member for Brighton will be offered the office of Lord High Chancellor, and will take the title of Lord WEATHERCOCK, and will have for his motto, "How happy could I be with either."

We are unable to guarantee the truth of the report that Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, anxious to furnish Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL with the opportunity he so greatly desires, of testing the opinions of the Electors of Birmingham, has determined to accept the Chiltern Hundreds, and thus afford his constituents the opportunity of choosing between the two.

THE COVENT GARDEN EXPLOSION.—Possibly in anticipation of the 5th of November—at any rate connected with a GYE.



“DISTRACTION!!”

NURSE. “LOR’, MASTER JOHNNIE, DON’T GO WORRITING YERSELF OVER THAT ‘EGYPTIAN PUZZLE’!
JUST SEE WHAT A NICE LITTLE PRESENT I’VE BROUGHT YOU!!”





WANT OF FINISH.

"I SHALL REALLY HAVE TO PART WITH YOU, SUSAN. YOU'RE SO SKETCHY IN YOUR DUSTING!"

GIRL GYMNASTS.

[Dr. FRANCES HOGGAN writes to the *Standard* strongly advocating gymnastics for girls.]

Let the Ladies learn gymnastics, if they please, as well as men, Alternating feats athletic with the pencil and the pen; They'll improve too pale complexions, and their eyes will shine as stars,

After practice on the ladders and the horizontal bars.

Rounded shoulders, slouching gait, and also haply crooked spines, By gymnastic exercises shall grow straight as mountain pines; Let the girls then learn athletics who in Town are apt to droop, Careful drill will make them upright and eradicate the stoop.

We should educate the muscles as we ever try to train, By severe examinations, many a weary little brain; We'll improve the dainty deltoid and the flexors of the arm, While the shapely *gastrocnemii* shall obtain an added charm.

Muscular shall be our children as the heroines of READE, And like Scott's moss-trooper hero, they shall all be "good at need;" Having taken boxing lessons, ill-used wives will turn like worms, While the brutal British husband pusillanimously "squirms."

Mrs. RAMSBOTHAM was very much troubled about her Nephew at College. "I am very much afraid," she said, "that he is not seriously studying, as he writes to say that his whole time is given to working out Comic Sections."

"MR. WILLING'S CHOIR."—Till he read of its giving a Concert at St. James's Hall, Mr. P. SIMPLE thought that "WILLING'S Quire" consisted of twenty-four sheet bill-posters.

PRINTING PRESS-URE.

SCENE—A Cabinet Council in Downing Street.

First Lord of the Treasury (speaking from under a pile of periodicals). Now that we have disposed of the principal business that has come before us—

President of the Board of Trade. With the assistance of the morning journals.

First Lord of the Treasury. Thank you, JOSEPH—as you say, with the assistance of the morning journals—we can turn our attention to minor matters. I think, HARTINGTON, you said that you wished to change the colour of the uniform of the Army from red to grey?

Secretary for War. Well, yes, I did. Fact was I thought that drab would be more serviceable and less observed by the enemy than scarlet. But have changed my mind. Fact is the *Rag Register* and *Military Observer* says changing colour from red will send the Service to the—

First Lord of the Treasury (interrupting). Hem! And you, SPENCER, didn't you say something at our last meeting about allowing your poor Irishmen to purchase potato-seed at less than cost price?

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Yes, I did. (Regretfully.) And really the idea (which was very popular on the other side of the Channel) seemed feasible enough. We were to get our potato-seed from the Colonies at an enormous reduction. However, I had to change my mind—that influential weekly, the *Covent Gardener*, objected to the scheme on the score that it would clash with the interests of some West-End Tradesmen.

First Lord of the Treasury (convinced). Dear, dear, that seems a pity! (After a pause.) But I suppose we must bow to the wishes of the Press! Then, NORTH-BROOK, what was it that you were saying about electric torpedo-boats?

First Lord of the Admiralty (with resignation). Oh, nothing! I had to abandon the idea because the *Man-o'-War* and *Navy Protector* threw cold water upon it.

First Lord of the Treasury (encouragingly). Well, well, we must remember that the Fourth Estate is—in fact, the Fourth Estate! Then, how about the other notions? (A silence.) I distinctly remember that you all had ideas. Now, tell me—What are you waiting for? Have you to consult anybody?

Chorus of Ministers (with wonderful unanimity). Yes—the papers! (Scene closes in upon—Governmental Responsibility and Real Statesmanship.)

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

THE trait that seems to us to be the most prominent in Her Gracious MAJESTY'S Book is the Tea-tray. The Royal Party seems to have been a perpetual Royal Tea-party.

"THE QUEEN'S Pages"—those in her recent Volume.

HOPE SCOTT'S Memoirs are most interesting; but, just as in Her Gracious MAJESTY'S Notes, where, what the public would most like to learn is omitted, thus making the entire volume little more than a developed Court Circular, so, here, just the very turning-point of HOPE SCOTT'S career is passed over, not in silence, but with an irritatingly mysterious reference. The biographer says (p. 86, Vol. I.), "He sustained a great disappointment, which led to his giving up all idea of adopting the clerical life. It is unnecessary to enter into particulars." The interested public also "sustain a great disappointment" by this provoking kind of reticence, which says too much without telling us enough. We are thinking of trying a few biographies of eminent individuals on this irritating plan.

THE Bishop of ST. ALBAN'S conduct in the case of old Mr. HOBSON was rather trop "Fort." The Bishop and Mr. FORT had to be informed by the ATTORNEY-GENERAL that Mr. HOBSON had married his Deceased Wife's Sister previous to the passing of Lord LYNDBURST'S Act, and that, therefore, the Bishop and the Vicar had no legal, and, for that matter, no moral right, to object to "HOBSON'S Choice." The sooner Lord LYNDBURST'S unnecessary Act is repealed the better.

LITERATURE is looking up. Her Gracious Majesty Queen VICTORIA is a popular Authoress, and His Holiness Pope LEO THE THIRTIETH is a publishing Poet. Of course he is not the first Pope who has been a Poet. We had an English one.

THE STAGE AND SOCIETY.

THE satisfactory position that the Stage occupies with regard to Society, in contrast to its standing in that respect years ago, has lately been a matter of frequent comment. Therefore we view with surprise the following Advertisement in the *Daily Telegraph* :—

STAGE.—A LADY, of good social position, **REQUIRED**, to join eminent Actor in grand West-End Matinée. Leading Artists. Exceptional opportunity.

It would appear from this that the Stage and Society are hardly as much in accord as we should have imagined. The Advertisement is scarcely clear, and we are unable to tell what part the "Lady of good position" is to fill. Is she to appear on the Stage, or is she simply to be a patroness of the entertainment? If the former, we tremble. We may shortly expect to see in the *Era* :—

TO the ARISTOCRACY.—**WANTED**, a few Duchesses, or Peeresses in their own Right, to combine leading business with general utility.

A LEARNED French writer, equally trustworthy as theologian and geologist, has recently advanced as a proof of the partiality of the Deluge, that the Negro race are without any tradition of their ever having been washed.

PAWNBROKERS' HOLIDAY TIME.—Lent.

PUNCH'S FANCY PORTRAITS.—No. 175.



THE COURT OF A. PEEL,

A SPEAKER ELECTED BY GENERAL CONSENT, IN FACT, WITHOUT "WORDS."

ASSAULT ON AN ALDERMAN.

THE days of Table-turning are well nigh past, but when Swords begin to show signs of animation, things look dangerous. The Sword of Justice, which is suspended behind the bench of the Recorder and Aldermen, at the Central Criminal Court, the other day fell upon the head of Mr. Alderman DE KEYSER. It is to be hoped that this Sword will conduct itself better for the future, and will not feel compelled to terrorise the Aldermen by weighty arguments and cutting remarks. The Mace in the House of Commons must have heard things enough to make it tremble during the last few years, but it has preserved a dignified composure, and has never rattled about the heads of the Irish Members, or attempted to give Mr. BRADLAUGH an admonitory tap. Justice is blind, but that is no reason that it should damage the head of an inoffensive Alderman with its Sword. Let us hope the LORD MAYOR will see to this at once.

Something in a Name, after all!

THE Theatre in Leicester Square that was to have been called the Pandora, subsequently the Phoenix, and afterwards the Queen's, is now to be christened the Empire. This title augurs well for its success, if we bear in mind a proverb at one time popular in Paris—"L'Empire c'est la pay"!

THE OLD AND THE NEW STAGER; OR, COACHING THE COACHMAN.

Old Stager, loquitur :—

THERE, take the whip! I've tooled for the last time
The old St. Stephen's Coach. A many journeys
I've taken her when I was in my prime.

Those mounted knights who tilted in old tourneys
Had need of skill in handling horses; yes,
But he who'd drive this team without a blunder,
Will want as much, and maybe more, I guess.

Will you succeed, I wonder?
'Twould need less tact to drive a Roman chariot,
Or—say—conciliate CHAMBERLAIN and MARRIOTT.

An awkward team! Plenty of pace and fire,
But, to command and keep them well together,
The steadiest nerve and strongest wrist will tire.

The Sun-god held his flaming steeds in tether,
But they were all well matched, I make no doubt,
While these,—well, take a look at them! They're trying!
Near leader's rather hot, though swift and stout;
Off-wheeler's given to shying,
Whilst that young bay you'll find a little randy,
With rather more of "devil" than comes handy.

Bless you, I've had some rasps, in my day,
Close shaves, and narrow squeaks. They're not improving.
Sometimes they're half inclined to run away,
Sometimes you'll have your work to keep them moving.
That Irish horse would spoil the smartest team,
And tax the smartest driver; jibs like winking,

Well, well, of my old seat I'll often dream.

For you—well, mind, no shrinking!
Keep a tight rein, use that new break with pluck, lad;
Don't spare the whip when wanted—and, here's luck, lad!

THE FRINGE OF GENTILITY.

MR. PUNCH, who is very particular with regard to the costume of his Parlour-maids, would not for a moment presume to interfere with his Cook. As long as his dinner is well cooked and punctuality observed, his Cook may wear a scarlet gown if she pleases, and her hair in ringlets. Other people evidently do not take so liberal a view of such matters, if we may judge from the following, which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* :—

A LADY requires good PLAIN COOK, for small family. Good personal character necessary. Wages £18, all found but beer. No fringe.—Apply this evening, five to nine.

It is possible to imagine followers being prohibited, but we fail to understand, if the Cook derives sweet consolation from a fringe, why she should not be permitted to indulge therein. Fancy, if this Lady compels the Cook she engages to abolish her fringe, what revenge every one of the family so miserable as the Cook, if she gives her mind to it. ALEXIS SOYER used to say that the Cook of a Cabinet Minister was a far more important official than his master, and no doubt a cook, ruthlessly deprived of her pet adornment would speedily avenge the frinjury in a series of the very worst dinners ever devised. It is plain that the above-mentioned Advertiser considers a good plain Cook cannot be too plain.

"CALLED BAC."—New book descriptive of the Game of Baccarat, by a Member of the Park Club.



PARLIAMENTARY VIEWS NO. 3. QUESTION TIME ASS-WAN EDITOR.

SENSE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM
THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, February 25.—The SPEAKER going! GLADSTONE moves Vote of Thanks for twelve years' hard labour; seconded by STAFFORD NORTHCOTE. Phrases not quite so well rounded as those of Grand Old Sentence-maker. But STAFFORD's kind heart evidently really touched at approaching separation. PARNELL rises, and whilst expressing profoundest esteem for SPEAKER, accuses him of having abused his high office.

"Couldn't help it, TOBY," he said, when I met him after. "If I hadn't done it, some of the boys would. JOSEPH GILLIS hinted that he had ready an oration suitable for occasion. HEALY would have done it with pleasure. No: there was no trouble about Tin Pot. He does as I bid him, howls to order, and ooo's to command. Others meant business. Thought I'd better do it myself; but can tell you I didn't like it."

The SPEAKER going! Lord HENRY LENNOX with his trousers (inadequately short to begin with) turned up, and a new coat on, fresh from the Boys' Clothing Establishment, unexpectedly appears. "I may look young," he says, "but that's art, good-temper, and domestic felicity. Re'ly, I'm past forty. Have indeed been thirty-eight years in the House. Feel bound to give the SPEAKER my blessing."

Mr. NEWDEGATE couldn't hear this comparative juvenile posing without concern. "Been here forty years," he says, in forlorn tones. "Forty years of Melancholy look down upon you, Mr. SPEAKER, and bless you."

"Had him there," said NEWDEGATE, in an aside to Sir WALTER BARTHELOTT. "LENNOX always crowing. Didn't think I was here."

SPEAKER going! Hardly had murmur ceased when a wizened old Gentleman, with grey hair unbrushed and one hand in pocket, surveyed the House through pair of horn spectacles.

"Fifty years I have been here," Mr. GREGORY said.

"Now's your time, Colonel," said DICK POWER, nudging the O'GORMAN MAHON dozing below the Gangway. "You've been here eighty years, or is it hundred-and-twenty? Go it, old boy! Don't let Ireland be beaten. Up and at 'em!"

"Bc'ad, I think you're right," said the old Amphibious Warrior, who had been listening with hand to ear. "That whiskey they sell here is, as you say, scarcely worth drinking. But I'll try a drop with a lemon in it," and he went out.

The SPEAKER going—going! One last Motion of Adjournment at Question Time thoughtfully provided by LEBBY. Debate on Grand Committees turned into Irish discussion. Then for the last time Sir HENRY BRAND puts the question—"That the House do now

adjourn." Members throng round the Chair to shake hands. The last passes by; the lights are put out; wig and gown cast aside, and the SPEAKER is GONE! *Business done.*—Resignation of SPEAKER.

Tuesday.—New SPEAKER elected. WHITEBREAD proposed him in speech full of that ponderous wisdom and imposing goody-goodyness which have earned for him curiously high place in estimation of House. "I am getting old now," said RANDOLPH. "Not so old, of course, as LENNOX, nor nearly so old as NEWDEGATE, nor half so old as GREGORY. Still, years pass by. Should like before I die to hear WHITEBREAD pronounce the word 'Mesopotamia.' How thrice blessed it would seem uttered in his voice, with his manner!"

"He always strikes me," said young BALFOUR, "as being the Captain Bunsby of the House."

RATHBONE little overweighted with responsibility of position. Got up nice little speech; learned it off by heart; recited it without mistake driving down to the House; and now, when he rises and sees crowded House, whole thing, as he subsequently explained in domestic circle, "got upside down like." Peroration persistently pressed for first place. The middle got out of perspective, and the opening sentences nowhere to be found. Haven't often seen such spectacle of piteous misery as RATHBONE groping about his speech.

"Wish I could get him to sit to FRANK HOLL as model for picture, 'Good Man Fighting with Adversity,'" says AGNEW. "Splendid subject!"

SPEAKER-Elect took House by surprise. Always thought him awkward man who couldn't make speech without keeping a firm grip of his holding on the table, and then stumbled along in awkward fashion. His speech to-night dignified, bold, and touched with true spirit of his high office. "PEEL will do," was the emphatic verdict of both sides of the House when he resumed his seat.

Sir ROBERT PEEL surveyed the scene from the Gallery. "Wish I'd been the good boy of the family!" he murmured. "Might have been Speaker myself. However, think I've managed pretty well. ARTHUR goes with the Liberals, and gets Speakership in family. I go with the Tories, and RANDOLPH has promised to take me up."

Business done.—New SPEAKER elected.

Wednesday.—House of Lords met to-day to conclude ceremony of election of SPEAKER.

"Can't stand much more of this," said Lord REDESDALE, trying to wipe his brow with end of white neckcloth. "Worked to death. We'll be having Saturday sittings shortly. It's all GLADSTONE."

"I like it," said Lord WEMYSS. "The more meetings the more opportunities for me to make speech or two. Don't know why LORD CHANCELLOR should have all the talking to-day. Think I could say a few words that the Commons at the Bar would like to hear. Always a favourite with them."

"A chattering cockatoo," growled REDSDALE, in his most guttural tones, "full of Wemyss and fancies."

"He certainly 'fancies' WEMYSS," said Lord GRANVILLE, sweetly, trying to turn an awkward conversation aside with a little joke.

New SPEAKER now installed in Chair. Looks very well in wig and gown, except that wig a little too large for him. "Yes, I know," he grumly said, when I hinted at the little peculiarity: "took it over from BRAND at a discount. Says wigs always are too big at first, but shrink in time amid heat of debate. Says it was just the same with him. Wig never really fitted him till he stopped the Irish Debate a year or two ago. Suppose it's all right, but it certainly feels a little floppy."

ANDERSON's Cruelty to Animals Bill on again for Second Reading. Time, after five o'clock. A near run to get it through before quarter to six. ANDERSON makes no speech. HARCOURT supports Bill in three sentences. MILBANK hotly in favour of measure, rises to support it. Begins to relate sporting reminiscences. Surprised at a quarter to six to find he's talked Bill out. Goes out back way so as not to meet ANDERSON. *Business done.*—New SPEAKER puts on wig and gown.

Thursday.—Another field night in House of Commons. Benches crowded; galleries full. Lord SHERBROOKE peering from amongst other Peers over the clock, thinking of times when he sat below the Gangway, and had something to say about Reform Bill. Discovers BRIGHT in familiar corner seat, and GLADSTONE in old place on Treasury Bench, older in the face, balding as to the head, but erect as ever; as full of energy and go as when BOBBY LOWE did battle with him across the Gangway. "All unchanged but me," the retired Gladiator murmured. "Wish I'd had TENNYSON's good luck; lost my robes, and never sank into obscurity of House of Lords."

RANDOLPH in fine form. Nothing could exceed the power and poetry of his imagery.

"Is this a time to bring in Reform Bills," he cried, frowning upon Mr. GLADSTONE, "when Railway Stations are flying into the air all around us, when our Cattle are dying by the hundred thousand, and our Expenditure is going up Millions and Millions a-day?"

Curious to note how instinctively Members looked up as these powerful and solemnly-spoken words fell on their ears.

"The Angel of Death is abroad in the land," Mr. BRIGHT said, on the eve of a great war thirty years ago. "You can almost hear the beating of his wings."

As men then sat holding their breath and listening, for peradventure they might hear the weird rustling, now all looked up as if they expected to see bricks and mortar, return tickets, fragments of station-masters, torn time-tables, and loose change darkening the air. Such is the force of oratory.

GLADSTONE knocked off his speech of an hour and three-quarters with ease. Didn't even bring down with him the pomatum pot. A glass of water sparingly sipped stood for all refreshment. Great joy amongst Irish Members, who were afraid their numbers would be reduced on redistribution of seats. Had all agreed to sacrifice O'DONNELL, but here unanimity ended. At Private Meeting of party, ballot taken to decide who should go. Each Member named two. O'DONNELL's name on thirty-four papers; the rest among them swept away the whole Party.

Scotch Members also sedately content. First effect of promised addition to representation was seen at nine o'clock, when W. E. G. gone away to dinner. Sir GEORGE BALFOUR appropriates PREMIER's seat on Treasury Bench. *Business done.*—Reform Bill introduced.

Friday.—Always regret that DARWIN didn't know our JOSEPH GILLIS. Feel sure he would have mentioned him in his great work. JOSEPH has recently developed new oratorical gesture of great effect. As he denounces what he calls "the Gooovern'ment" he puts long lean hand on side of neck by ear, slowly rubbing and pecking himself. At Monkey Temple at Benares remember a gigantic Monkey swinging on branch of Tamarind Tree, addressed few words to me with precisely that gesture. JOSEPH quite himself to-night. Likens Mr. TREVELYAN and TUKE to Long Firm, and genially accuses them of fraud! *Business done.*—Some Votes in Supply.



Wrapped Up in his Bill.

THE DARKNESS OF A FIRST NIGHT.

HONOURED SIR,

LAST week you were good enough to insert a few lines from my pen, and I venture to hope that you will again extend the same courtesy to me. That is a nicely-rounded sentence, which I trust will square you. The other evening, having a little spare time (as the saying is) on my hands, and a little spare cash in my pocket, I resolved on visiting the Pit of a Theatre. I may remark, that I am not a constant playgoer, and that, being a widower, I much prefer, when I do patronise the Stage, to witness the lighter forms of entertainment offered to us by the jollier form of Manager. I accordingly wended my way to the Nimbus Theatre, and after some necessary squeezing (during which exercise I was carried off my legs, and someone else carried off my umbrella), I found myself in the front row of seats. The Private Boxes and Stalls seemed unusually full, and I could not help commenting on this fact to my right-hand neighbour, a young gentleman who leant over the front rail and surveyed the house with a most supercilious aspect.

"Of course it is," he replied. "It's a fust night."

"A first night," I said. "What's that?"

"Oh! come I say," he sniggered, "that's laying it on thick!" I again protested my ignorance. "Well, look here," he said, pointing to the playbill, "it's the fust night of the new Comic Opera, *The Green Goblin*. You'll see some fun presently. Won't he, 'ARRY?" he continued, nudging a sandy youth, who was engaged in reading an evening paper.

"Rather!" returned the other. "rather,—if this bloomin' perdition don't get the bird, my name's not 'ENERY 'OPKINS."

I was about to inquire to what particular bird he referred, and how it was connected with the piece, when the overture began, and I concluded in my own mind that the biped was probably a character in the play.

Halfway through the First Act a hitch occurred, caused by two of the Actors forgetting their lines. With the greatest presence of mind my two young friends immediately shouted "Prompter!" and that official must have heard the call, as his voice was distinctly heard proceeding from the side of the stage. My neighbours rewarded his readiness with loud applause and cries of "Bravo!" and, indeed, when the Curtain fell on the Act, they again yelled "Prompter!" with such persistence as to lead me to the belief that they were personal friends of his. During the *entr'acte*, 'ENERY confided to his friend (whose godfathers and godmothers were presumably responsible for his appellation of 'ARRY) that the "guying would soon begin."

"Anything to do with *Guy Fawkes*?" I ventured to inquire.

"Rather!" said 'ENERY, with a grin. "We finds the forks, and the knife too. 'Ow's that for 'igh?"

"Good!" said 'ARRY. "Old WAGGLETHORPE" (the Author of the Piece) "isn't in it with you."

I was still mystified. During the progress of the next Act I was astounded to perceive that whereas many of the audience rolled about with laughter, and cracked their sides at the very simplest jest or the very mildest dance, and accentuated their approval with violent clappings of the hands, others, doubtless dissatisfied with these sycophants, expressed their disapproval with violent sibilations. Among the malcontents were my neighbours, who further supplemented their hissing with cries of "Yah!" At the end of Act II. they again shouted for their friend the Prompter, who did not, however, appear.

As Act III. went on, the demonstrations on the part of the sycophants and their opponents increased, and after the *Finale* had been sung, their clamour rose to fever-heat. The Actors and Actresses (including those who had forgotten their parts) were generously and, indeed, enthusiastically received when they paraded before the Curtain. Then 'ENERY and 'ARRY (evidently friends of the Playwright as well as of the Prompter) raised mighty yells of "Hauthor! Hauthor!" and most vigorously brought the palms of their hands together. I liberally seconded their efforts, for I confess that I had thoroughly enjoyed the quips and conceits of the Opera. Presently Mr. WAGGLETHORPE's graceful form appeared between the footlights and the "rag" (as I heard 'ENERY call the Curtain); but scarcely had his nose emerged from behind the proscenium when a most discordant Babel of sound arose from the Pitiests, and descended from their superiors in the Gallery. It was a mixture of cheering, howling, and the voice of the serpent. I looked at 'ENERY and 'ARRY to see how they would take this behaviour. Would you believe it, Sir, they were emulating the goose with their mouths, and clapping with their hands! What did their conduct mean?

When Mr. WAGGLETHORPE had retired, I overheard 'ARRY remark, "We baited 'im fairly that time, old boy." Then both roared with delight. I have dreamt of these events all night, and I have puzzled over them all day. My brain is incapable of solve the conundrum. If you have a spark of charity in your nature, do please explain the mystery and oblige

Yours distractedly, DIONYSIUS JONES.

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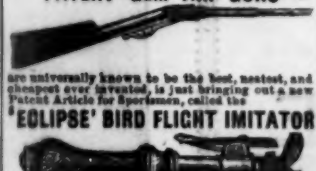
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